

Claims:

Claims 46-67 were mistakenly numbered as claims 47-68 in the last submission. The claims are re-presented below with the correct numbering.

1 – 20. (canceled).

21. (Previously presented) A method, comprising:

maintaining a cache specific to help data for one or more user interface components; and

in response to receiving a request for help data for a newly referenced one of the components:

if the help data for the referenced component is not in the cache, loading the help data for the referenced component into the cache; and

supplying the help data for the referenced component for user presentation.

22. (Previously presented) The method of claim 21, further comprising if the help data for the referenced component is in the cache, supplying the help data for the referenced component from the cache.

23. (Previously presented) The method of claim 21, wherein said loading comprises deleting the least recently requested help data in the cache if there is not enough free space in the cache to store the help data for the referenced component.

24. (Previously presented) The method of claim 21, wherein in further response to said receiving, loading into the cache help data for one or more non-referenced user

interface components associated with the referenced component.

25. (Previously presented) The method of claim 24, wherein said loading help data for the one or more non-referenced components is performed in a background process.

26. (Previously presented) The method of claim 21, wherein in further response to said receiving loading into the cache additional help data indicated by one or more hyperlinks in the help data for the referenced component.

27. (Previously presented) The method of claim 26, wherein in further response to said receiving loading into the cache further help data indicated by one or more hyperlinks in the additional help data.

28. (Previously presented) The method of claim 26, further comprising in response to receiving a request for help data for a referenced one of the hyperlinks in the help data for the referenced component, supplying the additional help data for the referenced hyperlink.

29. (Previously presented) The method of claim 21, wherein in further response to said receiving automatically loading help data into the cache for one or more non-referenced components associated with the referenced component based on predefined associations between the components.

30. (Previously presented) The method of claim 21, wherein said loading comprises loading the help data into the cache from a remote source across a network.

31. (Previously presented) The method of claim 21, wherein said receiving a request comprises receiving a notification event in response to a user changing focus in a dialog box, wherein the notification event comprises an indication of the reference component.

32. (Previously presented) The method of claim 21, further comprising in response to receiving a preload request indicating one or more of the components, loading into the cache help data for each of the indicated components.

33. (Previously presented) The method of claim 21, further comprising:

loading a registry with predefined data associating one or more non-referenced user interface components with the referenced component; and

in further response to said receiving:

reading the predefined data from the registry; and

loading into the cache help data for the or more non-referenced components.

34. (Previously presented) The method of claim 21, wherein the cache is one of a plurality of maintained caches specific to help data, wherein each cache includes help data for one or more user interface components of a user interface section of a respective plurality of user interface sections.

35. (Previously presented) A device, comprising:

a processor; and

a memory coupled to said processor, wherein the memory comprises program instructions configured to:

maintain a cache specific to help data for one or more user-interface components; and

in response to receiving a request for help data for a newly referenced one of the components:

if the help data for the referenced component is not in the cache,
load the help data for the referenced component into the cache; and

supply the help data for the referenced component for user presentation.

36. (Previously presented) The device of claim 35, wherein the program instructions are further configured to supply the help data for the referenced component from the cache if the help data for the referenced component is in the cache.

37. (Previously presented) The device of claim 35, wherein during said loading the program instructions are further configured to delete the least recently requested help data in the cache if there is not enough free space in the cache to store the help data for the referenced component.

38. (Previously presented) The device of claim 35, wherein in further response to said receiving the program instructions are further configured to load into the cache help data for one or more non-referenced user interface components associated with the referenced component.

39. (Previously presented) The device of claim 38, wherein the program instructions are further configured to perform said loading the help data for the one or more non-referenced components in a background process.

40. (Previously presented) The device of claim 35, wherein in further response to said receiving the program instructions are further configured to load into the cache

additional help data indicated by one or more hyperlinks in the help data for the referenced component.

41. (Previously presented) The device of claim 40, wherein in further response to said receiving the program instructions are further configured to load into the cache further help data indicated by one or more hyperlinks in the additional help data.

42. (Previously presented) The device of claim 40, wherein the program instructions are further configured to in response to receiving a request for help data for an indicated one of the hyperlinks, supplying the additional help data for the indicated hyperlink.

43. (Previously presented) The device of claim 35, wherein in further response to said receiving the program instructions are further configured to automatically load help data into the cache for one or more non-referenced components associated with the referenced component based on predefined associations between the components.

44. (Previously presented) The device of claim 35, wherein during said loading the program instructions are further configured to load the help data into the cache from a remote source across a network.

45. (Previously presented) The device of claim 35, wherein during said receiving a request the program instructions are further configured to receive a notification event in response to a user changing focus in a dialog box, wherein the notification event comprises an indication of the reference component.

46. (Previously presented) The device of claim 35, wherein the program instructions are further configured to in response to receiving a preload request indicating one or more of the components, load into the cache help data for each of the indicated components.

47. (Previously presented) The device of claim 35, wherein the program instructions are further configured to:

load a registry with predefined data associating one or more non-referenced user interface components with the referenced component; and

in further response to said receiving:

read the predefined data from the registry; and

load into the cache help data for the or more non-referenced components.

48. (Previously presented) The device of claim 35, further comprising maintaining a plurality of help caches specific to help data, wherein each help cache includes help data for one or more user interface components of a user interface section of a respective plurality of user interface sections, and wherein the cache one of the plurality of help caches.

49. (Previously presented) A computer accessible medium, comprising program instructions configured to implement:

maintaining a cache specific to help data for one or more user-interface components; and

in response to receiving a request for help data for a newly referenced one of the components:

if the help data for the referenced component is not in the cache, loading the help data for the referenced component into the cache; and

supplying the help data for the referenced component for user presentation.

50. (Previously presented) The computer accessible medium of claim 49, wherein the program instructions are further configured to implement, if the help data for the referenced component is in the cache, supplying the help data for the referenced component from the cache.

51. (Previously presented) The computer accessible medium of claim 49, wherein said loading comprises deleting the least recently requested help data in the cache if there is not enough free space in the cache to store the help data for the referenced component.

52. (Previously presented) The computer accessible medium of claim 49, wherein in further response to said receiving the program instructions are further configured to implement loading into the cache help data for one or more non-referenced user interface components associated with the referenced component.

53. (Previously presented) The computer accessible medium of claim 52, wherein the program instructions are further configured to perform said loading help data for the non-referenced components in a background process.

54. (Previously presented) The computer accessible medium of claim 49, wherein in further response to said receiving, the program instructions are further configured to implement loading into the cache additional help data indicated by one or more hyperlinks in the help data for the referenced component.

55. (Previously presented) The computer accessible medium of claim 54, wherein in further response to said receiving, the program instructions are further configured to implement loading into the cache further help data indicated by one or more hyperlinks in the additional help data.

56. (Previously presented) The computer accessible medium of claim 54, wherein in response to receiving a request for help data for an indicated one of the hyperlinks the program instructions are further configured to implement supplying the additional help data for the indicated hyperlink.

57. (Previously presented) The computer accessible medium of claim 49, wherein in further response to said receiving the program instructions are further configured to implement automatically loading help data into the cache for one or more non-referenced components associated with the referenced component based on predefined associations between the components.

58. (Previously presented) The computer accessible medium of claim 49, wherein during said loading the program instructions are further configured to implement loading the help data into the cache from a remote source across a network.

59. (Previously presented) The computer accessible medium of claim 49, wherein said receiving a request comprises receiving a notification event in response to a user changing focus in a dialog box, wherein the notification event comprises an indication of the reference component.

60. (Previously presented) The computer accessible medium of claim 49, wherein in response to receiving a preload request indicating one or more of the components, the program instructions are further configured to implement loading into the cache help data for each of the indicated components.

61. (Previously presented) The computer accessible medium of claim 49, wherein the program instructions are further configured to implement:

loading a registry with predefined data associating one or more non-referenced user interface components with the referenced component; and

in further response to said receiving:

reading the predefined data from the registry; and

loading into the cache help data for the or more non-referenced components.

62. (Previously presented) The computer accessible medium of claim 49, wherein the cache is one of a plurality of maintained caches specific to help data, wherein each cache includes help data for one or more user interface components of a user interface section of a respective plurality of user interface sections.

63. (Previously presented) A system, comprising:

means for maintaining a cache specific to help data for one or more user-interface components; and

means for loading the help data for a referenced one of the components into the cache in response to receiving a request for help data for the referenced component, if the help data for the referenced component is not in the cache.

means for in further response to said receiving, supplying the help data for the referenced component for user presentation.

64. (Previously presented) The system of claim 63, further comprising means for supplying the help data for the referenced component from the cache if the help data for the referenced component is in the cache.

65. (Previously presented) The system of claim 63, wherein said means for

loading comprises means for deleting the least recently requested help data in the cache if there is not enough free space in the cache to store the help data for the referenced component.

66. (Previously presented) The system of claim 63, further comprising means for, in further response to said receiving, loading additional help data into the cache for one or more non-referenced components associated with the referenced component.

67. (Previously presented) The system of claim 66, wherein said means for loading additional help data comprises means for performing said loading additional help data in a background process.